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The Commonweal

June 8, 1951

Wayward Crusader

"The Service of Truth, Justice and Peace"—and Columnist Stokes

DONALD McDONALD

Farmers Without Farms

JOHN C. CORT

The State As Monster

H. A. REINHOLD

Volume LIV **15c** *Number 9*

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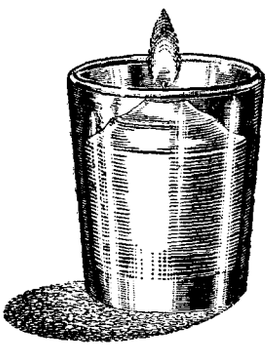

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The Commonweal

WEEK BY WEEK

The French Elections

FROM our background of Democrats versus Republicans the French party system appears as an enigma. The fact that fifteen lists of registered candidates for the French National Assembly are presenting themselves to the voters, June 17, manifests one of the sharpest differences between our respective systems. It reflects the fact that Frenchmen of every station are far more intense political theorists than we are. They seem to take to heated political argument almost from the cradle. By the time they are in secondary school and college they are fierce adherents of this political theory, violent adversaries of that. French universities give birth to political demonstrations on the part of their students which would confound their American counterparts.

One result of this acute political consciousness is a proliferation of parties; each splinter group serves as a vehicle for one of the contending bodies of political theory. In France the citizen does not vote the lesser of two evils as we do here; his ballot goes to the candidate standing for his political theories. It must be added that French politicians are capable of the most petty and conniving factionalism.

The June 17 election, the first in five years, finds the Popular Republicans (MRP), Radicals, Socialists and various independent and center groupings arrayed against the Communists (who polled 6,000,000 votes in 1946) and DeGaulle's RPF with its first political candidates. On 368 of the 621 seats in the Assembly these "center parties" have allied their lists of candidates. With the new election law, this may enable them to shunt out all RPF and Communist candidates in most of these districts. It is a move on which rests the hope of continuing the same sort of uneasy coalition government of the Center that has been sweating things out in the postwar years.

The entry of the RPF on the lists makes many observers hesitant about predicting the outcome. It is known that DeGaulle has a strong following in Paris but his claim to a large following among the French workers remains to be put to the test. Not too much is known of his political program. From time to time various facets have become clarified. DeGaulle has recently spoken out in favor of genuine cooperation with Western Germany. While generally favorable to the Atlantic Pact, he has been adamant in demanding a voice for France in all decisions and jealous of French sovereignty in France and North Africa. The election of a large bloc of RPF candidates would not then appear to be an obstacle to American policies of allied defense of the West.

What the majority of Frenchmen have dreaded up to now is a real showdown between Left and Right. They have preferred a succession of comparatively ineffectual, short-lived governments of a democratic cast to anything approaching an authoritarian system. Their sentiments therefore gravitate toward the various parties of the Center. Temperamentally they show a preference for endless debate over peremptory dictation.

Linking Movies with Television

IN THEIR heyday American movies provided an impressive spectacle of the possibilities of standardization in the arts. They had a limited number of big-name stars. Most of these were living in the aura of their first smash hit. Ever since, they had been cast in similar roles. And it is astonishing how many of the big names of twenty years ago are still around.

Radio has offered some variation on the overly limited Hollywood pattern. It developed new talent of its own—men and women who could put their personalities across without benefit of make-up or of mugging.

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While television has narrowed the gap, this new industry has likewise developed stars of its own. There has been plenty of over-lapping. But radio and television artists in their own right have been numerous and prominent enough to counterbalance the omnipresence of Hollywood headliners.

The projected merger of the American Broadcasting Company with the United Paramount chain (650 movie theaters) is a stride toward further standardization. United Paramount has been trying out giant television screens in 5 of its movie theaters; it plans immediately to set up 22 more. A proposal before the National Collegiate Athletic Association's TV Steering Committee would put some big college games on TV screens simultaneously in 150 movie houses of the Fabian Theaters and United Paramount chains.

What will be the effect on leading participants in TV newsreels when they realize that every gesture will immediately be transmitted to the millions? How can larger educational institutions keep athletics in its properly subordinate role when teams know they will be performing before half a million spectators? It will likewise be difficult for college administrators to maintain a good perspective when large sums are dangled before them by TV representatives. The United States seems to be drifting toward a new stage in communication via television with little advertence to what sort of fare the new medium will offer.

These are but a few of the questions raised by this new prospect. And when competition for the recreation dollar narrows down to a duel between broadcast and "captive" movie theater TV, the lives of many Americans will be the poorer for it.

• NEXT WEEK •

ROBERT BARRAT writes of Marshal Pétain, "the oldest prisoner in the world."

"Truly the Petain problem goes far beyond that of a man; it is the problem of a policy, of a period of French history. And here we find ourselves face to face with the inability of men to judge contemporary history. How pass judgment on the policy of Vichy? Can it be judged calmly? Can we try today to weigh the pros and cons, a thing that was impossible on the morrow of liberation?"

Mr. Rusk's Speech

ALTHOUGH it was apparently not intended as such, Assistant Secretary of State Dean Rusk's now famous speech supporting the Chinese National Government appears to have been a rather important statement of American policy in the Far East. What it really seems to amount to is a further refinement of the containment policy and perhaps the implications of Rusk's speech can best be understood in terms of a review of that policy.

It was after Russia had made known her intentions in the postwar world through a series of aggressive acts in Iran, Hungary, Bulgaria, Rumania and Czechoslovakia that the United States came to adopt as its predominant postwar foreign policy the strategy of containing the spread of Soviet Communism. At first the policy met with considerable success in Turkey, Greece, Japan and Western Europe, coming to a spectacular climax in the Berlin airlift.

But when the Soviets, who had finally been checked for the time being in the West, broke out in Korea a year ago, acting in the person of their Asiatic satellites, the United States for the first time really understood the full implications of its foreign policy; the nation knew then that it could not talk global containment of Russian expansion at the same time that it was talking about cutting the fat off its armed forces, as Mr. Johnson had been doing.

The Korean war also focused attention on another serious weak spot in our policy: for it was in the Far East, specifically in China, that Communist expansion had gotten so far out of hand that it was not possible to make the doctrine of containment work there. The reasons for our failure in China are now, of course, in hot dispute. But one thing can be said for sure: even if we had decided to bolster and reform the anti-Communist forces in China, assuming that it was still possible to do this by the time the containment doctrine became our policy, this aid could not have been effectively brought to bear on the situation in China without a partial remobilization of our own armed services in order to supply the thousands of American military personnel the job demanded, according to the estimate of General Wedemeyer. But the fact was, the country was in no mood for rearmament.

In the circumstances Secretary Acheson decided to follow a wait-and-see policy, in the hope that, as General MacArthur expressed it to Congress, the Chinese Communist movement was

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actually motivated by a "nationalist urge" allied to Soviet Russia "for its own [Chinese Communist] purposes" and that it could be won away from Moscow by skillful diplomacy. Pursuing this hope, we offered to submit the question of Chinese Communist membership in the UN and the question of Formosa to the United Nations for settlement, rather than antagonize the Chinese Communists and thus drive them closer to Moscow. However, our approach did not have the desired effect on the Peiping regime. Its attitude toward us became steadily more hostile and led finally to the savage intervention in Korea.

Agreement with the Nationalists

IT WAS shortly thereafter that the United States signed a secret agreement with the Nationalists on Formosa providing for arms shipments to Chiang. The meaning of this agreement, in the light of the Rusk speech, may now be a little clearer. The State Department apparently decided in December that it could do nothing else from then on but apply the containment policy as vigorously as possible in China and elsewhere in the Far East. But obviously, since it wanted to negotiate a cease-fire in Korea with the Peiping regime and bring the bloodshed there to an honorable end, the Department could not afford to advertise the anti-Chinese Communist policy it had just set in motion.

Later, under pressure from its critics, the Administration was forced to reveal the terms of its secret agreement with Chiang, and now Mr. Rusk appears to have put the rest of our policy on record: Rusk said that the Peiping regime "is not the government of China" and "is not entitled to speak for China in the community of nations"; "we believe," he said, "that the National Government" on Formosa "more authentically represents the views of the great body of the people of China." Since Mr. Acheson would later contradict none of these points, it must be that the original policy of containment has hardened in Asia and that it has in fact been in the process of hardening for some months. John Foster Dulles, another Far Eastern policy-maker who spoke on the same platform with Mr. Rusk, said that this would be our attitude toward China "unless and until actual conduct gives clear proof of [a] change" on the part of the Chinese Communists.

One can only judge from these speeches that the Department is not really counting on such a change of mind. But why, our European allies are asking, did Mr. Rusk make these statements just when a cease-fire seemed to be a real possibility in Korea? Does not this speech of his notify the Peiping regime that we are now committed to its overthrow and to the restoration of the Nationalists on the mainland and that therefore the Communists would be foolish to lay down their arms? Certainly it does seem that the timing of the speech was simply unfortunate. But it may also be that the State Department does not anticipate signing a cease-fire agreement with the Communists at all, in view of the prohibitive terms the Chinese have been asking; the Department may expect the fighting in Korea to die out just as it did in Greece.

But the State Department can hardly expect that the Peiping regime itself will simply die out, and yet Mr. Rusk has said that "the United States will not acquiesce in the degradation that is being forced" on China today. How, then, are we going to liberate China? Mr. Rusk says that that is up to the Chinese people themselves, reinforced and encouraged by our assistance. By this he must mean, among other things, that the Nationalists will have to return to the mainland, because all of the American military planners agree that US manpower should not be committed to a land war in Asia. Surely, however, one has to entertain great expectations to believe that Chiang can actually do this job.

It seems that another course of action, in addition to possible Nationalist landings on the mainland, is called for. Asiatic power will have to be built up in Japan and elsewhere to counterbalance Chinese Communist power, and above all the United States must keep its eye set primarily on Russia, not China, because Russia is the real power behind China today. The decision with Russia is most likely to decide the fate of China, and all the Chinese leaders are undoubtedly betting on just that.

The Choice

SO WHILE we may like to think that we can beat Communist China by an embargo, or by bombing, or by refusing to recognize her and acting as if she didn't exist, all that is probably a delusion. It is only realistic to expect that Communist China will be there as long as Soviet Russia is behind her and we should, then, honestly face the fact that as the line of containment is drawn tighter in the Pacific, the showdown with Soviet Communism, peaceful or otherwise, approaches. It will be, either way, no cheap price we will have to pay, especially since the choice of war or peace lies with the Soviet Union.

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Before and After

THEY set up the first army Separation Centers in the spring of 1945. The original plans were quite elaborate. The men who figured them out apparently counted on a slow, gradual demobilization. We were sent to a school at Fort Sam Houston in Texas. There they brought in vocational-guidance experts, insurance experts, job-trend experts, psychological testing experts, military forms experts, educational experts and even a few psychiatrists, to lecture the GI's chosen to be counselors.

For five or six weeks we listened to the experts, took notes, studied in the barracks in the evenings and took regular exams. Those who passed all exams were graduated one fine day, with pomp and military ceremony worthy of West Point, and the clerks in the orderly room promptly changed our Military Occupational Specialties from Rifleman, Company Clerk, Tail Gunner or whatever it happened to be, to 262-Military Counselor.

"A proud MOS, men," said the Colonel who shook our hands at the graduation. "No one will call you heroes, but in a sense yours is the most important job now. The Army has entrusted you with sending back the flower of American manhood prepared for peaceful civilian life. Men, you have to see that millions of fellows like yourselves get started off on the right foot."

When we arrived at the newly set-up Separation Centers there wasn't enough business to keep us occupied. Men were trickling out of the service—special hardship cases, psychological misfits and a few other categories. We sat around reading newspapers all day until some officer decided that we might as well put our brand-new expensive training to use at the Reception Center on the other side of the camp. There, men were still being brought into the Army.

Until the first great boatloads returned from the theatres of war, we who had been trained to help men get resettled in civilian life spend our days supposedly helping recruits to get adjusted. It went on for a couple of months until demobilization was speeded up. Sometimes you'd spend the morning with the recruits and the afternoon with the hardened veterans. It was like before-and-after pictures. You began to come to some conclusions about what three or four years as a soldier did to men.

The ones coming in were mostly young, kids who had just finished high school. A few older recruits who had somehow escaped the draft board for three years were a small minority. Most of the newly drafted were around 18. They were the group which took over the early occupation duties in Germany and Japan.

These kids when they came in were generally unspoiled, unsophisticated, inclined to be idealistic about their new life. They talked freely and unselfconsciously about Mom and Pop, showed you the girl in the inevitable snapshot case, and though they might be wary and uncertain about what stretched ahead, were infinitely willing to do their part.

The veterans getting out were often more fearful of returning to civilian life than the kids coming in were of the army. The Reception Centers and the Separation Centers the army operated were both established on a regional basis, so the two groups were cross-sections from the same locality. I suppose that some of the recruits were younger brothers of the veterans.

It is hard to generalize about the thousands who passed through. You got a vague, general impression, but there were so many that now, six years later, with few exceptions, individuals fade into the general blur. After demobilization really got under way, the early trickle turning into constant sea-waves, the men went through the center and left for home with precious little counseling. A few hurried words, forms completed—zip, the man was 'processed.'

But during the short time that the counseling program was actually in effect, you could get some picture. And if you didn't know it before, you knew for sure then that the moral temptations an army faces, any army, are serious ones. You concluded, too, that few men manage to get through the experience unscathed. The soldiers being interviewed for discharge were a far more battered group, in every sense, than the green kids in fresh uniforms.

Especially for the young, the experience of being abruptly thrown into a radically different society from the sheltered life of home and school is hard. For one thing, for the first time, the symbols of authority are not incontestably on the side of morality. For many the shock is too much. There are numerous casualties, and veterans themselves are the first to admit it.

As some authorities suggest, many men, maybe even most, have come out of the army experience no more beat-up morally than they would be at home. This may be. But I know that among those who passed through the Separation Center there were many who carried around serious regrets.

It was not at all unusual to hear a beribboned veteran tell the story of what happened to him since he left home a few years earlier and then end with: "I'm not the same guy. I guess I let the army get me. Now I'm back I wish a lot of things didn't happen. I wish I didn't do a lot of things I did. But you know how it is—you go along and first thing you know, you've changed, you're GI in the worst sense."

This about sums up one clear-cut impression of the counseling experience.

Now a few attempts are being made to offer a definite pre-service training in certain Catholic schools—to give the new generation of GI's an idea of how they can get through the moral ordeal that may lie ahead of them. Others are drawing up a realistic, down-to-earth program of Catholic Action for the potential GI's. (Anything of the sort smacking of the pietistic or Sunday-school approach could be disastrous). All such efforts should be encouraged. No one, I suspect, is more for them or something like them than the veterans who have their army service (they hope) behind them.

JOHN COGLEY.

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Wayward Crusader

Richard L. Stokes of the Catholic press is proud to be called another Pegler.

By DONALD McDONALD

"WHO started the Korean war? Certainly not General MacArthur. By his own admission, President Truman began it, at the insistence of Secretary of State Dean G. Acheson."

This sounds like something out of Jacob Malik and the Big Lie of 1950. Actually it's from our Catholic diocesan press. Specifically it is from the April 27, 1951, column of Richard L. Stokes. Readers, unaccustomed to the Stokes version of current history, may find the above a bit hard to swallow since a fairly credible story has gotten around that North Korea, aided and abetted by China and Russia, is guilty of the Korean aggression. But Mr. Stokes' regular 325,000 Catholic readers, after being exposed for nearly two years to this kind of writing, can presumably turn the intellectual somersaults this column requires.

Since 1945, the US has been doing a fairly adequate job of checking Soviet Russia without ourselves getting sucked into a global war. We've had Greece, Berlin, the Marshall Plan, Point Four. But, again, we have Mr. Stokes' word for it that America's postwar foreign political action must be a cruel hoax. In his pre-election instructions to Catholics last fall, Mr. Stokes intoned: "The time, if ever, is now for Americans, and especially Catholics, to speak out with 100 per cent courage and indignation against the unholy entente between White House and Kremlin."

Some of us were interested to read General MacArthur's recent testimony in Washington that he "unquestionably" recognized "Secretary of Defense George C. Marshall as a patriotic gentleman of capability in his field." This must have come as a blow to Mr. Stokes who refers admiringly to General MacArthur as "a pious soldier." For Stokes had informed his readers that Secretary Marshall is one of President Truman's two "evil counsellors" (the other, of course, being Secretary Acheson). After the MacArthur recall, Stokes wrote: "Acheson's intellectual bondsman is the dull-witted Secretary of Defense, Gen. George C. Marshall, a man as vindictive as an Indian."

DONALD McDONALD is a member of the editorial staff of The Catholic Messenger, the diocesan paper of Davenport, Iowa.

This column was evidently a little strong even for one of Mr. Stokes' subscribing priest-editors who inserted into the Stokes text the customary, but invalid, comment that his publication was not responsible for the views of its columnists who were, he said, "allowed wide latitude in expressing their opinions." As if, by this blanket evasion of editorial responsibility, one could empty "opinion" of the last dregs of its meaning, including the fealty it owes to truth and justice—a couple of commodities mentioned in the Catholic press' 1950 Press Month slogan: "The Catholic Press in the Service of Truth, Justice and Peace."

★

MR. STOKES has been writing for the Catholic press since August, 1949, when he resigned from the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch* to "devote himself to Catholic journalism." Although his column is described as a "week by week critique of State Department policy as it impinges upon the Church" (I think there is a sectarian fallacy lurking in that description), Stokes fishes occasionally in other oily waters.

In his column for the week of October 21, 1949, this Catholic writer analyzed the re-election of President Truman in 1948, and the consequent crisis confronting the nation's "26,000,000 Catholics . . . the one sure fortress of a people ravaged from within by Marxist or affiliated doctrines. . . ."

'Our' enemies in this crisis, according to Mr. Stokes, are "union labor and farm interests" who re-elected Mr. Truman and who "in general . . . now direct the nation's internal policy;" and a "third minority clan, American Jewry" which has "sequestered foreign policy as a whole." These "three master groups," Stokes went on, "are only a fraction greater (reckoned at 28,000,000 voters) than that of the American Catholic community."

Since reading that analysis I have been waiting patiently for Mr. Stokes to explain: (1) how to account for the 5,500,000 men who are Catholics but who must have voted for Mr. Truman in 1948 since they are also members of his hostile farm-labor alliance; (2) how we 26,000,000 Catholics in the sure fortress can deliver a sectarian vote when millions of us have not arrived

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at voting age. Clearly, we are just out-matched.

Mr. Stokes' development of his anti-Jewish comment is particularly interesting since it was written for the Catholic press and Catholic readers, and not, as one might suspect, for Gerald L. K. Smith. "The Jews of America," wrote Stokes, "total only 4,770,000, but they have clustered into something resembling a state-within-a-state and even a colonial power. Their colony is the Israeli Republic, a non-viable plantation which would collapse without incessant largesse wrung from American wealth. Voting strength is due to the concentration of half the Jewish-American population in the five boroughs of Greater New York—a strategic post for shifting the Empire State's 47 electoral ballots in one direction or another. Added weapons are journalism, finance and the so-called 'Frankfurter network,' an invisible government in Washington. . . ."

The only thing I can see lacking in this familiar repertoire is the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion."

★

MR. STOKES, in 1949, was apparently looking forward to the 1950 elections and the messianic political action of Catholics, all 26,000,000 of us, despite the disclaimer he tacked on to the above column. "No one is advocating," he wrote, "that American Catholics should form a specific political party. But when we next handle a ballot, let us remember that the issue at stake transcends all candidates, platforms and party labels. Let the voter's mood be that of a Christian conscience. . . ."

As the 1950 elections zero hour approached, Mr. Stokes dispatched his weekly communiques to the besieged Catholics, urging them to vote right or this country would be done for.

His post-election analysis was calculated to show that Democratic set-backs had been due largely to the Catholic vote. Accordingly, in Maryland, Senator Tydings' defeat "may not be unrelated to the fact," he wrote, "that in Baltimore there exists, so far as I am aware, the only well-organized and militant Catholic Action group in the United States." Since Mr. Stokes operates, I suppose, out of Washington, he must also have been aware of the politically damaging and fraudulent Tydings-Browder composite photograph. His crediting of the Tydings' defeat to "Catholic Action" will probably raise an eyebrow or two in the Vatican where, a few weeks ago, the Pope, speaking to leaders of Catholic Action, said, "We have no need to tell you that Catholic Action is not called upon to be a power in the field of party politics."

In New York City, wrote Stokes, "there are 2,000,000 Catholics and hosts of them must have voted for (Mayor Vincent) Impellitteri." Not accounted for are the two million or so Jews whom Mr. Stokes, a year earlier, had deployed as part of the Truman electorate hostile to us Catholics in the fortress. "There are more than a million Catholics in Pennsylvania," where Senator Myers was defeated, wrote Stokes. And "Connecticut has upwards of 700,000 Catholics" where Chester Bowles was defeated. The defeat of Helen Gahagan Douglas in California "thrilled American patriots."

Although Mr. Stokes' call for a Catholic religio-political crusade supposedly transcended "party labels," by a curious coincidence all of the "enemy" defeated happened to be Democratic officials.

"It seems possible," commented Mr. Stokes, "that the masses of Catholic electors have sensed the truth that American politics is no longer a sporting contest between two parties, but a matter of life and death for their country and their faith; and that they, and perhaps they alone, can save the world."

However, Mr. Stokes' optimism over Catholic political behavior turned out to be rather short-lived. In March of this year, four months after his November exultations, he wrote: "American Christians are not politically organized and in great numbers are not even politically conscious."

★

SUCH self-contradictions do not seem to bother Mr. Stokes. Indeed, since he rides the surface of events, a certain quick-footed shiftiness is demanded in order to make each event and each aspect of an event contribute to his prefabricated interpretation of history. Thus, last January, when things were black in Korea, Mr. Stokes wrote: "The melancholy duty now imposes itself of declaring that the proposed rearmament of Europe is five years too late . . . and that the military elements leading to failure in Korea are exactly the same on the continent, and that the choice between arming or not arming Europe is a dilemma with death on either horn."

By March, things had picked up a bit, militarily speaking, in Korea. The UN troops had regained the offensive: Mr. Stokes forgot his melancholy duty and informed his readers that we had a "high and sufficient motive for arming and protecting what remains of Europe," which "must be defended because it is the world's greatest reservoir of Christian culture."

Occasionally, Mr. Stokes takes premature credit for prophecies which fail to materialize. In his melancholy column of January, he wrote: "There is the gloomiest of satisfactions in saying 'I told you so.' At the outset of the Korean war

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this writer predicted the catastrophe bound to result from a campaign against an enemy, thousands of miles distant, with inexhaustible possibilities of reinforcement." Shortly after this was written General Ridgway's men completed their re-grouping, forcing Mr. Stokes to shift gears somewhat abruptly.

★

IN SOME of his early columns, Mr. Stokes ventured into the field of political and economic ideologies and demonstrated at the outset that, with the apparent exception of American Republicans and Southern Democrats, all Anglo-Saxon and continental European social thinkers were either Communists or Catholics. No subtle distinctions for him.

"From the classical point of view," wrote Mr. Stokes, "Communism is just one of the heads of a Hydra monster that was spawned during the 19th century in the slums of Europe. Regarded as members of the same body are Socialism, the Labor Party in England" (this will come as a surprise to his namesake in England, Catholic Laborite Richard Stokes recently named to the Ministry) "and those American experiments in 'social engineering,' the New Deal and the Fair Deal. They differ in method and pace of action. But all are revolutionary left-wing movements. All are totally materialistic and all are irreligious, from the blatant atheism of Moscow to an exclusive absorption in the economic conception of life that weakens or stamps out every spiritual value."

" 'Truman Socialism,' " he wrote, "is the name given by critics to the White House program, with its special privileges for labor, espousal of nationalized medicine and championship of the Welfare State."

I have given enough, I believe, of this Catholic press columnist to indicate the pattern of his thought, the object of his emotional appetite and the nether regions to which he would lead his 325,000 Catholic readers. Whether the subscribing editors like what Mr. Stokes likes and hate what he hates, or whether they merely offer him to that section of their readers who "know what they want" is difficult to determine.

Certainly, since neither insight nor charity characterize Mr. Stokes' column, the editors must have some other reason for giving him precious space in their publications. One editor said he put on Mr. Stokes "after serious consideration" because "he's got a punch that is rare to a columnist. . . ."

Some of the proprietors of our diocesan press contribute what they can to the breathless urgency of the Stokes message by suitable headlining. One editor titled the January column predicting catastrophe in Korea and elsewhere, "AMERICA IN DANGER." Another editor took a stronger view of the same column and asked: "A PREVIEW OF DOOM?"

The column for the week of January 18, 1951 anticipated the Republicans' April, post-MacArthur impeachment-of-Truman talk. "If the people of the US really understood what has been made to happen to them since 1945 there would be a universal cry," cried Stokes, "from coast to coast for the resignation or impeachment of Harry S. Truman. . . ." Our foreign policy, he wrote, "from the standpoint of the Kremlin" appears to be a "direct and unflinching design which might have been drafted by Joseph Stalin himself." One editor labeled this information, "HOUR OF PERIL" while another editor titled it, "SUPREME CRISIS COMING" and added a question mark.

★

I REFERRED earlier to the Catholic press' 1950 slogan. We are, said the editors, in the service of truth, justice and peace. Pretty fine sentiments. Meeting that year in Rome, Catholic journalists were complimented by the Pope for selecting this objective which, he said, "is as vast as it is fraught with meaning."

"Let the Catholic press," said the Pope, "gladly renounce the vain profits of a vulgar interest, of cheap popularity: let it know how to maintain its dignity with energy and pride. . . .

"As far as the members of the Catholic press are concerned," continued the Pope, "this delicate task presupposes competence, general culture, especially in philosophy and theology, the gifts of style and psychological tact. But what is indispensable for them, in the first place, is character. . . . The Catholic journalist's breadth of view and judgment can open eyes too timidly fixed on traditional prejudices. . . . Catholic journalists will always refrain from 'making' opinion. Better, they will aspire to serve it."

Last fall, some of Mr. Stokes' readers, "few in number," he wrote, complained about his "frantic polemics," "vitriolic diatribes" and his "miserable failure to rise above the politics he condemns." He signed off that column, writing: "I am very proud to be branded as 'another Westbrook Pegler.' It can only be wished that the compliment were better deserved."

I think the Catholic press can do better than that. I know the Catholic press *must* do better than that. At a time when constructive, intelligent and charitable thinking and writing are so desperately required, it is the cruellest deception of Catholic readers to offer them the kind of writing examined in this report. It is truly tragic that Catholics can be charged with contributing to the darkness of the day.

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FROM ENGLAND

A Matter of Private Enterprise

WHEN Hollywood's Robert Montgomery was over here some time back he had the choice of finishing a series of radio talks to America with an interview with either Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill or Geoffrey Leonard Cheshire. He chose Cheshire. So maybe that name is not quite unknown to all of you; though he cannot be said to be really well-known even in Great Britain, for he is the sort of man who avoids publicity. Yet he must have had plenty of it in his time, for his "Who's Who" entry would begin something like this:

> CHESHIRE, *Geoffrey Leonard.* Born: 1917. Educated: Stowe and Merton College, Oxford. Gazetted in the R. A. F., 1939. Flew over 100 sorties in World War II. Distinguished Flying Cross, Distinguished Service Order (two bars), Victoria Cross, Observer for the British government at the atomic destruction of Nagasaki. Mustered out, 1946.

From time to time since then he has made the headlines again, in a very different field. Newspaper reports have their *lacunæ;* and Group-Captain Cheshire himself has neither literary nor oratorical airs and graces: he is one of those people who in a few almost disconnected sentences and reminiscences can give a picture as alive and detailed as that of any professional expounder. I can only limp behind him with the aid of a journalist's pen.

Like many another man in 1918 and 1945 Group-Captain Cheshire left military service with the vague hope—or perhaps resolution—of beating his sword into a really useful plowshare. He saw around him many men who, for various reasons, were finding the transition from service to civilian life extremely difficult. Something ought to be done for them. So he accepted the loan of a house in the Midlands where he could take some of them in and try to help straighten them out. The enterprise was a complete failure. At the end of eighteen months, Mr. Cheshire gave it up: he had acquired some experience, and very considerable debts.

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HE HAD bought a large country house in Hampshire, Le Court, for his settlement, and was now left with it on his hands. So he went and lived there alone. After a time he gave shelter to an ex-soldier, who was dying of cancer and had nowhere to go. A little later he was asked to take a homeless and sick old lady. He agreed. When she arrived she proved to be 93, stone-deaf, and to have come much against her will. But the day came when she would throw her arms in affection round Mr. Cheshire's neck.

That was the beginning. Without premeditation, without planning, without resources, without regard to "how these things are done," other sufferers were received and looked after at Le Court.

So far there had been no apparent religious impulse behind the work. It seemed to be an example of what some would call misplaced contempt, and others with no less misplaced admiration, "pure humanitarianism." But Mr. Cheshire must have given some consideration to Catholic Christianity, for he had come to the conclusion that it was either altogether true or altogether false. He had no use for the "I admire the Catholic Church, but . . ." line: there could be no "but" about it.

In the middle of one night the first guest of Le Court died. Mr. Cheshire was alone with him. A temple of the Holy Spirit from which the human spirit has gone out must be washed—a sort of last baptism. There was no "constant hot water" at Le Court, so Mr. Cheshire put on kettles and sat by the dead man to wait. He idly picked up a book and read. It was Vernon Johnson's *One Lord, One Faith* (the dead man was a Catholic). Later Cheshire sought out the nearest priest, whose parishoner he became.

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WHEN Mr. Cheshire started on this work he knew nothing about medicine or correct hospital practice (I doubt if he knows much now). His fourth or fifth guest was a consumptive. "You can't take him," he was told, "'TB' is 'catching.'" This was news to Cheshire. "But," he objected "what does it matter? All the others are old, most of them are dying anyhow."

He also started without any funds or endowment or regular income. I don't know how he pays for it all. The Church Army, a well-known and admirable Anglican organization, gave him several hundred pounds' worth of furniture, beds and equipment. One very difficult financial moment coincided with an unsought press write-up. Within a short time £1600 had rolled in, from 35-cent books of stamps to 100 pound notes sent anonymously in an unregistered envelope. And two unknown girls came down from London to put in a day typing his letters for him.

But don't imagine that Mr. Cheshire belongs to the "unpractical visionary" order, the sort of fool who lights his pipe with a 5-dollar bill. Not at all: no more than Don Bosco or Joseph Cottolengo. He takes only those guests who *cannot be provided for elsewhere;* if they can contribute, however little, towards their maintenance, they are expected to do so. If they can't, all the more reason for taking them.

Then the national health service came along. It offered to pay for the maintenance of patients at Le Court, at generous rates, and Mr. Cheshire should choose which patients he accepted. "You'll have no more money worries. The patients will cease to regard themselves as 'guests,' as they will have a right to be there under the service. And we would recommend that you concentrate

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less on the old—whose day is past—and attend rather to the sick young, whose future is before them." Cheshire took time to think about that. Did he want to end the "guest" relationship? Was not his concern in the first place precisely for the old? He thanked the officials—and refused their offer. But the national health service's free doctoring, free medicine and the like, due his guests individually, he gladly accepts.

Listening to Cheshire talking of his work I was struck by the recurrence of several things I had met over and over again in reading the lives of men and women, from Peter Fourier to Frances Cabrini, who founded great works of mercy for the needy of all kinds. Like Cheshire, how many of them started with nothing; and when at some critical moment their wants were unexpectedly relieved, how often the need was *just* met—with no balance over. How many of them, too, started knowing nothing about the work—nursing or teaching or whatever it was—that they were going to do.

Another thing that Cheshire experiences in common with so many of these is this: that when he takes thought and plans and "has a program," it fails. When he deals with situations as they arise, all goes well. One example of this was so striking in its simplicity and humanness that I must tell it. Once he agreed, twice in 24 hours, to take people whom he just did not know how to accommodate. They were desperately ill, had nowhere to go, and were desperately miserable in consequence. They were delighted to hear that someone would have them—and within another 24 hours both were dead, before they even got to Le Court. "They died happily," said Cheshire, "so evidently I did right to agree to take them."

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MR. Cheshire has now 32 guests at Le Court, and a staff (at one time the only trained nurse on the premises was herself one of the guests, and too ill to do much). He has his own living to earn, and so when a job turned up in another part of the country, he took it. Le Court is left in charge of a small committee, and the founder visits it once a month—he says it gets on better when he is away.

But the arrangement has another advantage—he can start another home. In the far southwest corner of England, where he now is, he has acquired an ex-military building, which will conveniently hold a dozen or so people. It has no garden or other land attached, so it is specially suitable for the bed-ridden. Neither has it water, sanitation or electric light. Electricity does not worry Cheshire; he managed with oil lamps at Le Court, and learned that a lot of other necessities are not necessary at all. But water and drains he must put in.

Fifteen hundred years ago, with the Roman empire and all that he knew as civilization tumbling about his ears, St. Augustine, better fitted than most to realize what was happening, sat down quietly to write a book, *Civitas Dei*. In alarmingly similar circumstances Leonard Cheshire helps to build the City of God by turning quietly to the care of the sick and the helpless aged. May his work live as long as Augustine's. DONALD ATTWATER.

THE LABOR MOVEMENT

Farmers Without Farms

THERE are few legends of American folklore that have died harder than the legend of the American farmer. According to the popular belief, all American farmers are sturdy yeomen who till their sixty acres and live at peace with God and man in their neat white houses under the spreading elms. They have no help on the place, except perhaps one young hired hand who, in his shy but irresistible way, is certain to marry the farmer's daughter in the last reel.

Norman Rockwell does the type well on the covers of *The Saturday Evening Post*. These men are lean, rough-hewn and as honest as an old potato sack. Self-reliance and integrity stick out all over them. They are the backbone of the country, and the heart and kidneys as well. Nothing is too good for them.

I am sure there really are farmers like that. Just as there must be a few industrial workers who are as heroic as the workers Seaman draws in his cartoons for the labor press.

But if you think that all farmers are cut from that mold, you should read "Migratory Labor in American Agriculture," the report of the President's Commission on Migratory Labor (for sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C.; price 75c).

One of the five members of the commission was the Most Reverend Robert E. Lucey, Archbishop of San Antonio, Texas. And the report is in the same courageous and progressive style that we have come to expect from the Archbishop. In sober and objective words it does nothing less than rip the lid off a veritable cesspool of misery, injustice and exploitation.

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THE thought occurs to you as you finish the report, "How could things ever have become so bad?" The answer that occurred to this reader was this. First, there is the legend of the American farmer mentioned above. Second, we have an unusual situation in that both political parties have been wooing the farmer and outbidding each other for his hand since the last century. By and large the Republicans are resigned to the fact that the Democrats have won the favor of organized labor. But the Democrats are by no means resigned to the fact that the Republicans have cornered the farm vote. And in 1948 Truman proved that the farm vote could be pried loose, especially in the Midwest.

Add to this a network of farm organizations and high-powered lobbies that know how to milk every last drop of political advantage out of the situation. The horrible

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result is that it is almost impossible to find a politician who can say "no" to a farmer, whether that farmer be the sturdy yeoman type on his family-size farm or a million-dollar corporation operating its factory-in-the-field and grinding another million dollars out of the hides of a thousand wetback Mexicans.

The result is that the farmer, or farm employer, has been exempt from almost every law passed since the turn of the century in Congress or the various state legislatures which has been designed to place a shield of humanity around the worker against the possible injury by ruthless employers. Most farm workers do not even enjoy the benefit of accident compensation laws, which is perhaps the oldest form of protective labor legislation.

The farm worker gets no protection for his right to organize in a trade union. He is not covered by Social Security. He gets no unemployment insurance. He gets no old-age pension. If he is a migrant, most communities will not give him any form of relief or medical assistance because he cannot fulfill the residence requirements. Because he generally has no union contract to protect him and because the minimum wage-and-hour law does not apply to him, he must work long hours, without overtime, for a miserable wage. And, to make that wage a little less miserable his wife and children must work along with him.

If, by chance, there is a law that might protect him a little and a few conscientious public servants who might try to enforce it, then the farm organizations are always there to get to the politicians and have the dogs of the law called off.

There is a federal law that provides that benefits shall be paid to growers of sugar beets and sugar cane only if they do not employ children under 14 years or permit those between 14 and 16 to work more than eight hours a day. Enforcement, however, is in the hands of local committees. "Only nine violations were reported in 1948 and the same number again in 1949. . . . Total fines in the sugar-beet industry of the United States were $150 in 1948 and $200 in 1949."

★

YOU HEAR a lot about parity in farm circles. Stop me if I'm wrong, but as I understand it the parity price system is an elaborate mechanism by which Congress has taken upon itself to shore up farm prices so that they bear at least the same relationship to the prices of things the farmer has to buy that they did in the base period of 1910-14. Congress does this mainly by having the government step in when prices begin to look a little sickly and purchase tremendous quantities of corn or potatoes which then proceed to rot in warehouses while millions starve.

Me, I prefer the Brannan Plan if we must have farm price-fixing, a phenomenon, incidentally, which the Republicans would never tolerate if it were applied to industry. But let's take the parity system. In 1910-14, the base period, the wages of farm workers averaged 14c an hour, or exactly two-thirds of the average wage for factory workers, which was 21c an hour.

Today (1951) the farmer gets parity prices, but the farm worker whom he employs gets an average of 55c an hour, or exactly 37 per cent of the average factory wage, which last year stood at $1.45. In short, the farmer gets at least the same relative price as in 1910-14, but pays his help only half the relative wage. Pretty nice.

Don't think for a moment, however, that the farm worker is even 37 per cent as well off as the factory worker. In 1949 the latter averaged 250 days of work during the year, with a total income of $2,720. The nonmigratory farm worker averaged 120 days work and the migratory 101 days, with total incomes for the year of $580 and $550 respectively.

Before I read the Commission's report I had a vague idea that most migratory farm workers were single men, the shiftless, rolling-stone types that will never settle down under any system. Far from it. Most of them are family workers who bring their families with them. In fact, many farm employers prefer the family groups. "In Oregon a personnel director of a large farm said, 'In bean picking the best group is a family group—mama, papa, and the kids picking beans.'" A charming picture.

A physician testifying before the Commission said: 'A survey which I made and photographed in the Mathis, Texas, labor camps, showed that 96 per cent of the children in that camp had not consumed any milk whatsoever in the last 6 months. It also showed that 8 out of every 10 adults had not eaten any meat in the last 6 months. . . . The reason given was they could not afford it with the money they were making."

★

IN West Palm Beach, Florida, not far from where the rich folks, in their fine clothes, dance in the expensive hotels, a social worker told the Commission: "Most of them [i.e., the quarters provided by farm owners] do not have running water or adequate toilet facilities. The families are crowded into one or two rooms, and in many instances, we have found upon inspection, farm laborers living in quarters where in a good dairy country such as I come from, you wouldn't place your good-blooded cattle." The Commission's report indicates that this kind of housing is typical, especially among migrant farm workers.

Many farm employers have no contact at all with their employees. They do business with a labor contractor, who usually does not have to be licensed. A licensed contractor in Los Angeles testified about his fellows: "[The labor contractor] is in a position to sway the general equilibrium of honesty in any direction he wants. . . . There are many contractors and solicitors who have camps. . . . They supply the food, the women, the narcotics—of which there is a heavy traffic within these camps—and beer and wine and everything else, so they subsequently end up with a large proportion of the payroll."

These camps are of course crawling with syphilis, TB, malaria and most of the virulent diseases known to man. Education for the children is almost unheard of. Truly the American farm worker, and especially the migrant

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farm worker, is America's original forgotten man.

To clean up this rotten, shameful mess the President's Commission has made some 55 separate recommendations, mostly for legislation by the federal and state governments. It would be impossible to do justice to them here. Mainly, the Commission's conclusion is this: there is no good reason why not, and a thousand compelling reasons why, the farm employers of this country should be covered by the same laws of human decency which have been applied, and enforced, in the case of industrial employers. Farm workers are also flesh and blood. They too have a right to live and raise their children as sons of God, or at least as something better than wild swine.

The Commission says that farm workers should have the benefit of minimum-wage laws, unemployment insurance, old-age pensions, accident compensation, and the protection of law in their right to join unions of their own choosing.

This last, in my opinion, is the most hopeful solution of all. As the report says, "In the long run, self-organization is the method by which agricultural workers can best improve their working conditions." To date union organization is still in the brutal pioneer stage among farm workers. The Commission says, "We encountered only two instances of farm employees being covered by collective-bargaining agreements currently in force." There are other agreements in force, but not many.

The Communists have worked in this vineyard, trying to harvest the grapes of wrath in such organizations as the old Food, Tobacco and Agricultural Union, since expelled from the CIO and become part of a Commie amalgam known as the Distributive, Processing and Office Workers, independent. The Socialists have tried to do something about it and some of them are active in the leadership of the National Farm Labor Union, AFL, which has lost some heroic struggles, notably at DiGiorgio's mammoth slave plantation in Bakersfield, California.

It would be a good, and fitting, thing to see a few Catholic apostles working among these least, most despised of American workers. Here surely is a work that cries to heaven for the doing.

A Correction

RICHARD WARTMAN of Milwaukee points out that I was wrong in blaming Henry Ford II for the Ford Company's dealings with a company controlled by Joe Adonis, the notorious racketeer. He quotes an AP dispatch to the effect that Adonis' company was "the only trucker licensed by the Interstate Commerce Commission to serve automobile plants and the Edgewater area" and that the company has complained to the ICC.

The dispatch seems to indicate that the Ford Company complained to the Interstate Commerce Commission only after the Kefauver Committee had exposed the tie-up. Nevertheless, if any injustice has been done here to Mr. Ford or his company, I sincerely apologize.

JOHN C. CORT

The Stage

IDIOT'S DELIGHT

IT SEEMED to me that the City Center revival of Robert E. Sherwood's old anti-war play was interesting on a number of counts. For one thing, Mr. Sherwood's status as a prophet is made remarkably clear: written during the lull between two World Wars, the play is uncanny in its detailed forecasting of the shape the second was to take. The author was also singularly successful, it now becomes evident, in mirroring the precise attitudes of the period and their vulnerability in the face of events to come: the Marxist brotherliness which, in its fanaticism, was quickly adaptable to the needs of nationalism; the other-worldliness of science, which was to find itself not so much above politics as it had supposed; the British complacency which was to respond so quickly, almost matter-of-factly, to any challenge to the status quo; and so on. More interesting than any of these things, however, is the sense of helplessness which pervades the play, the mood of surrender to idiocy as though idiocy were the only remaining characteristic of the human race. However ironically Mr. Sherwood presents this feeling of helplessness, it is a real feeling, and it is by far the most revealing thing about the play. The mood of the period was clearly one of abandonment to the stupidities to come, as though nothing could stop them from coming, and as though there were no room for personal responsibility in the matter. This last attitude is made clear in Mr. Sherwood's selection of the munitions-maker as the villain of the piece: a comfortable evasion of personal guilt, and an easy surrender to materialist and determinist forces over which man was thought to have no control. The general tone of the play—Mr. Sherwood not only reflects the period's sense of futility, but seems to share it—now tends to say a great deal more about the reasons for international collapse into warfare than was originally intended.

The production which City Center has provided for the play is the best of the spring series. The stage direction takes the enormous proscenium opening into account, and the setting is a useful one. Lee Tracy and Ruth Chatterton are both expert in the old Lunt-Fontanne roles, and the supporting company is uniformly adequate. This is not to say that the evening is a perfect one: Miss Chatterton is really more accomplished than well cast, and both she and Mr. Tracy need to have their performances paced. They are skillful and interesting line by line; but the lines are too regularly measured and the performance as a whole suffers from an overly deliberate rate. (*At City Center*)

WALTER KERR.

THE COMMONWEAL has received many gratifying notes of appreciation from persons and organizations whose needs have been publicized in these pages during the past few months. Readers of the magazine have given their support, with remarkable generosity, to a variety of worthy causes.

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The Screen

SHOOT THE WORKS

IT'S STILL a wonderment to me that Hollywood goes on and on making war films; perhaps even more amazing, although definitely connected with the production, is the fact that the paying customers at the box office continue to attend such films. No doubt with this important fact in mind, three studios are releasing new war pictures, all of which follow a pattern set before.

Falling into the realistic mold established by "Battleground" and "Breakthrough" is *"Go for Broke!"* which offers the usual scenes of a group of men as rookies at training camp, then as new fighters tasting battle for the first time, then as hardened combat men doing their stuff. What makes "Go for Broke!" different from its predecessors is that most of the members of its cast are Japanese Americans portraying these heroic fighters of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team. Dore Schary has given the film an excellent production, and if some of the edge hadn't already been taken off this kind of picture by its worthy forerunners, "Go for Broke!" would no doubt be proclaimed from the housetops. Director-writer Robert Pirosh has handled his theme well, and the Japanese Americans make just as interesting and diversified a group of men in camp or in battle as the other actors we have seen going through similar trying experiences.

At times the film gets just a touch of patronizing in portraying its individual stories of heroism, but it does succeed in putting over the fact that war is war and as fighters in Italy these Japanese Americans are second to none. Along with their individual stories, the plot also deals with a lieutenant (played by Van Johnson), one of the typical 90-day-wonder boys, who is not too happy about leading these men; he finally learns, of course, that Americanism is a matter of heart and mind not of ancestry. As soon as he learns *and feels* that his men are just as good as he is, he becomes a fine leader.

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THE second of these new pictures tells the story of one small victory in World War II, the story of how the master of a Gloucester fishing boat fouled up a German plan to reload U-boats in Newfoundland. Actually *"Sealed Cargo"* turns out to be pretty much of a blood-and-thunder melodrama; but Director Alfred Werker builds up some good suspense that keeps you on edge most of the time. Readers of the book (Edmund Gilligan's *The Gaunt Woman*) on which this was based may have been more convinced by the exciting events than will audiences who find the visualization of these episodes rather obvious, but even they may be held by this series of thrills. The cast, which includes Dana Andrews, Claude Rains, Philip Dorn and several other hardy seamen, are properly virile and nautical. You may wonder how a fairly small square-rigger can have a secret hold that seems as large as the basement of Radio City Music Hall, but once the torpedoes in this hold start popping, you realize that the whole setup is theatrical and the fireworks display challenges any Fourth of July exhibit.

★

EVEN more war-cum-fiction is an item called *"Fighting Coast Guard"* with its curious mixture of realism, fancy and cliches. It tells the story of a man who goes into the Coast Guard for officers' training rather than be drafted into the army. Thoroughly establishing this man as a cad, the script has to work overtime to convert him into a hero before the finale, but Director Joseph Kane had such thin material to work with that he really couldn't establish anything—except that the Coast Guard are very good fighters. Some excellent clips from old documentary war films enliven the scene every now and then, but even these are so obviously not part of the whole that they only distract from what there is of continuity. Maybe you better just skip this illustration and take my word for it that the Coast Guard are hot as fighters.

★

IF realism, however grim, is your idea of entertainment, I should like to recommend a double bill of old tried-and-proven movies that are now playing in New York and will soon be on screens throughout the country. The first item on this attractive program is that top-notch documentary made by Robert Flaherty in 1934: *"Man of Aran."* Whether you've seen this before or not, you'll find that it stands up as a cinematic gem, and in its hour's running time you'll actually live with these hardy folk on the islands off western Ireland. Their fight to grow potatoes on barren rock (with the help of seaweed and a little soil found in crevices) and their never-ceasing fight with the sea may wear you out as you watch this fascinating picture, but the whole experience will give you a new slant on the other half and perhaps a few ideas of gratitude about your own comforts. You may wonder as I did how this film was photographed, but your applause for the beauty of the shots will be long.

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THEN you'll applaud all over again when you see the second picture in this outstanding package. It is *"The Edge of the World"* which was written and directed by Michael Powell in the late '30s. Although there's a touch of story to its plot, the whole film is so well done it has all the effects of a documentary. Made on the island of Foula (called Hirta in the movie) which is off Scotland, this picture seems to be the answer to the sad people who struggle through the hardships of Aran. At Hirta, after several interesting personal conflicts are started but not solved, the people finally ask to be evacuated because they cannot survive as their fathers did in this barren place.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG

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Communications

The Unspoken Ism

Boston, Massachusetts

TO THE Editors: We are all very much indebted to John Cogley for his calm and expert analysis of the latest work of Mr. Paul Blanshard. Unfortunately, however, in the course of this article the position of *The Pilot* on a matter of very grave importance was entirely misconstrued.

On page 299 of his book Mr. Blanshard made reference to the speech given in Boston by Secretary of the Navy Francis P. Matthews in August of 1950 suggesting to his fellow Americans the notion of a preventive war. Blanshard goes on to say "Boston's diocesan Catholic paper, *The Pilot,* condoned his plea and pointed out that wars of offense might be as moral as wars of self-defense under certain circumstances." Your reviewer, John Cogley, mentions this reference in his analysis of Blanshard's book; he intimates that this was in fact the position of *The Pilot.* The simple truth in this matter is that *The Pilot* explicitly took issue with Secretary Matthews' view which it considered to be immoral.

Blanshard's reference came, curiously enough, not from *The Pilot* (September 2, 1950) but from the Boston *Herald.* If he had followed that paper with any regularity, Mr. Blanshard would have been familiar with an exchange of letters between Professor Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. and myself which appeared in its columns and made clear beyond cavil the position of *The Pilot.* Some papers, to be sure, in the excitement, reported *The Pilot* as favoring preventive war, the Paris edition of the *Herald-Tribune,* for example, and even, I am told, that trumpet of truth called *Pravda.*

In the original editorial *The Pilot* pointed out that Catholic theologians allowed an offensive war as well as a defensive one but only under very restricted conditions. We analyzed these conditions and found that they were not present at the time. We concluded, "a war of aggression which might be morally permissible under some conditions is not, however, at this historic moment allowed." This is obviously the precise opposite of the Secretary's position.

Another phrase used by Secretary Matthews was mentioned in the editorial. We wrote, quoting the Secretary, "Is it right to say that we should be ready to pay *'any price* . . . to compel cooperation for peace'? The answer to this is an unequivocal NO." It is difficult to see how we could disagree with the Secretary in a more vehement manner.

I suppose it is typical of Mr. Blanshard's scholarship that he does not test his references and follows secondary and highly inaccurate sources. In the past year it has been a wearisome procedure pointing out first to one and then to another that the distortions which have been spread about and attributed to an editorial in our paper do not now and never did express the sentiments of *The Pilot.* (Rev.) Francis J. Lally.

Far Eastern Policy

New York, N. Y.

TO THE Editors: It would be difficult to add to the letter of Mr. H.C.E. Zacharias challenging your charge "that the United States was seriously responsible for the downfall of China" (May 25, 1951), but since The Commonweal is of the same opinion still as evidenced by its comment on this letter, it needs to be said that it is one thing to find mistakes of judgment in our policy prior to the triumph of the present Communist regime and it is quite another to pretend that any policy whatever—short of complete military conquest of China—could have averted a Communist triumph.

For years noisy politicians have sought to create this notion to damn Truman. But all evidence available shows that for all its success as propaganda it is basically untrue and groundless. With Mr. Zacharias, I regret this identification of your views with something I feel to be a manufactured fiction imposed on Americans by a handful of Republican politicians, by our Republican press, and by the Luce periodicals.

It is of little permanent gain to the world to be rid of General MacArthur and his fanatical crusade for "the liberation of Asia from Communism" if MacArthurism itself is taken over by the government which wisely removed him. This seems to be happening. It is a natural fruit, as I see it, of the long deformation of opinion in America by hysterical professional anti-Communists, men not really interested at all in the concrete problem of defending the West against Russian imperialism, but desperately in need of some emotional issue and aware that anti-Communism is a wonderful tool for their purposes.

I for one account all this mob emotion prejudicial to the nation's sanity and to all wisdom whatever in the field of foreign policy. I believe with the British that we have MacArthur and his noisy supporters in this country to thank for Chinese intervention in Korea. I believe that the true purpose of the MacArthurites is to lead us step by step down the road to American domination of the Pacific—to the American Century, as Mr. Luce has christened it. Europe they wish to write off, for it is westward the course of Empire takes its way. Whether I am right in so thinking, one thing is certain, the pronunciamentos of this group have given the Chinese complete warrant for seeing us as a menace, as an avowed foe, bent on conquest of Asia.

THIS fact has never been seen in this country. It has been seen in England and the sympathies of innumerable English men and women are *with* the Chinese and *against* us in this matter. Our press would explain this as proceeding from pro-Communism or from anti-Americanism. This is nonsense. It springs from far flung facts which very few Americans have ever seen in their true outlines and their true proportions. In or out of the UN, China is in the world. Where peace by military decision is either impossible or too costly for consideration there is left only peace by negotiation. Ne-

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gotiation calls for mutual concessions, and if we can secure a just and lasting settlement in Korea by recognizing the present government of China and by re-affirming our earlier recognition of Chinese sovereignty over Formosa, we shall be worse than fools—we shall be madmen, not to make concessions called for by every fact whatever save only China's present belligerency.

G. R. GARRETT.

Washington, D. C.

TO THE Editors: In your lead editorial of May 11, I think you have oversimplified a complex problem in stating that our cease-fire policy [that is, the cease-fire that General Marshall was endeavoring to bring about between the Nationalists and the Communists after World War II] was "largely based on the hope that the Chinese Communists were not necessarily Stalinists and they would cooperate in such a government. . . ." This hope, as stated, is certainly naive. However, I think the alternative must be considered. We furnished the Chinese Nationalists with tremendous amounts of aid *after* V-J Day. Our military observers have said the Nationalists did not lose a single battle during 1948 because of insufficient equipment. When Nationalist forces began deserting to the enemy en masse, it was obvious that only such drastic measures as American armed intervention could maintain Chiang in power. We were no more willing to follow that course than we are now, to restore Chiang.

We must face the fact that a few hundred million Chinese constituted the force chiefly responsible for what happened in China. This plus the fact that the Russians had been working like beavers in China for 25 years towards the end they now have achieved.

Certainly our record isn't spotless; and some of our China "experts" let ideology affect their objectivity. But to say that we were "seriously responsible" for China's downfall is to assign too great a burden of responsibility to our Administration's policy of the last six years. The argument might have greater validity if the blame were spread over the last twenty years.

What are some of the things we would do "a lot differently"? And would they materially have affected the results?

As you correctly state, the future of our Far Eastern policy is of paramount importance right now, not the past. This makes it very disturbing to think that men who might otherwise make valuable contributions toward our future policy, will be discredited if they are falsely made to bear the blame for what has happened in the past.

Since our foreign policy makers seem to have to bear a stronger burden of temporal punishment than other mortals, for their actual sins, let's not increase their burden by assigning to them exclusively guilt shared by many others.

WILLIAM D. BRODERICK.

Of Note

The Movies

THE most recent issue of *The Catholic Art Quarterly,* official bulletin of the Catholic Art Association (4380 Main Street, Buffalo 21, New York), under the general title of "The Movies and Christian Culture" includes an English translation of excerpts from an editorial in the International Film Review.

> Michaelangelo's dictum: "Good painting is in itself religious," upholds our conviction that we must attain to the fullest development of the language of the screen before we can turn it to our ends. We must make and preach *good* cinema before we can even envisage the advent of morally good films. . . .
>
> Many people, though filled with praiseworthy and highly edifying intentions, approach the question from a faulty viewpoint. The best of these try to make use of tried and proved weapons whose weakness is that they belong to other spheres, such as literature or the theater. Their immediate success may deceive us for a time, but the problem remains untouched and more urgent than ever. After fifty years many enlightened minds still ignore the cinema as an art and treat it as a machine for recording certain visual beauties which literature cannot describe nor the theater bring to life.
>
> But this art is powerful only when it is really an art. Take away their artistic aspect and the movies become a low grade diversion—a drug for the eye and ear—which impairs judgment, inspiration and social conduct.
>
> We must be exacting in all that pertains to the movies, particularly where religious themes are concerned. We must not give our approbation to films which claim to interpret the Scriptures but lack the artistic and intellectual integrity which we consider essential. We must even combat certain outwardly religious films whose spirit is a betrayal of the Faith. A badly made religious film is a betrayal, not only because it has nothing to give to the believing audience, but especially because it drives still further from the fold those straying sheep for whom Christ gave his life.
>
> More important, from our point of view, than exegetical movies or screen hagiographies are those films which, by their manner of telling a story, of posing or solving a problem, convey the idea of a Christian way of life.
>
> It is no longer possible to ignore the movies as a creative medium, a means of expression and of teaching. Any culture—and particularly any religious culture—refusing to lend itself to this means of reaching so many is indeed courting great danger.

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The State as Monster

By H. A. REINHOLD

HANNAH ARENDT established herself firmly, after her flight from Nazi persecution, on the top rungs of American intellectual life. Her contributions to the *Kenyon, Sewanee* and *Partisan Review* and the *Review of Politics* are always of the highest caliber. *The Origin of Totalitarianism (Harcourt Brace. $6.75)* is her magnum opus, a leisurely and thoughtful book that will remain a challenge for a long time.

I have personally never felt that anti-Semitism could be regarded as so essential to totalitarianism as Miss Arendt does in this book, and she has not altogther convinced me yet. As a matter of fact, I think that any minority of any kind would be in the same position as the Jews in a totalitarian society. It seems difficult to see more than an ever-present symptom of nascent totalitarianism in budding anti-Semitism. The US melting pot gives the best guarantee against totalitarianism unless Communist pressure becomes so potent from the outside that it leads to hysteria.

Miss Arendt sweeps out several of our customary thought patterns, though the hope that her observations will become very common is quite slim. "Totalitarian movements depend upon sheer force of numbers to such an extent that totalitarian regimes seem impossible, even under otherwise favorable circumstances, in countries with relatively small populations"—you simply have not enough people to practice your "social engineering," to maintain well-stocked concentration camps, to afford a giant army and secret police and all the "extras" for mammoth demonstrations.

This seems to be a very shrewd observation which she enlarges by noting the mass of "apparently indifferent people whom all other parties had given up as too apathetic or too stupid for their attention," forgetting that democratic government "had rested as much on the silent approbation and tolerance of the indifferent and inarticulate sections as on the articulate and visible institutions and organizations of the country." As soon as contemptuous totalitarian movements enter parliamentary institutions they prove that "parliamentary majorities were specious and do not represent the realities of the country." Once the public is convinced of these conditions there comes the cry for a strong man and his cohorts.

Miss Arendt shows how propaganda and terror in totalitarian countries are two sides of the same coin, at least in the initial stages. There is later a "mu-

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REV. H. A. REINHOLD, who was expelled from the German Reich under Hitler, is now a pastor in the Diocese of Seattle.

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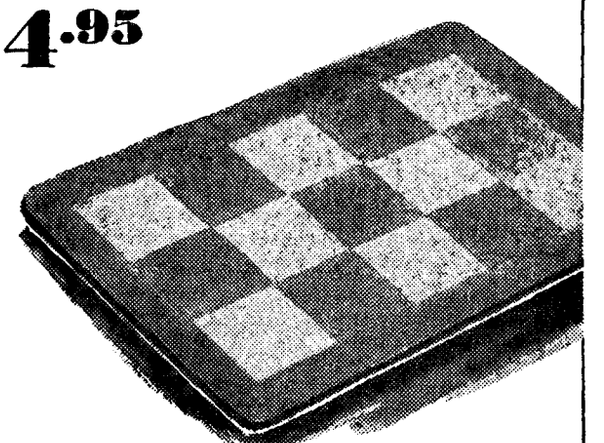

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tation": propaganda becomes indoctrination when absolute control is established and terror will then be used not so much to frighten as to carry out certain programs. The government will say unemployment is at an end—and stop unemployment compensation, according to Marxian doctrine: he who does not work shall not eat. When Stalin rewrote Bolshevik history in 1938 according to his own ideas, he simply liquidated all the old revolutionaries who were witnesses of an older version of revolutionary history and tenets. The Nazis killed off the Polish intelligentsia and then calmly stated that Poland had no intelligentsia. At this stage "propaganda" is used only outside, indoctrination is used inside the totalitarian colossus. Propaganda ceases completely where there is complete subjugation: in concentration camps. Thus propaganda is a weapon for conquest, but terror is the essence of totalitarianism.

★

ONE has to read the clever and precise words of Miss Arendt in their context, as her deductions are so pregnant with thought and fact that only an equal of hers could dare condense the book. Her reference to relations between gangsterism and totalitarianism, between business advertising and totalitarian propaganda, between monopoly and statism, between religious dedication and totalitarian selflessness are most enlightening, because she is careful to keep the distinctions and not to indulge in cheap and inaccurate parallelisms.

These few inadequate and perhaps incoherent samples must suffice to advertise this great book that should serve as a warning to us not to misunderstand the true threat of totalitarianism. We in America see its threat in open aggression, in spies, in the fifth column of the Communist Party, small as it is, and its sympathizers; in the rule of terror in China, Russia and their satellites and the unbelievable double talk of Vishinsky and Gromyko.

As the very idea of a Supreme Being excludes two or more gods, so totalitarianism, as Miss Arendt proves conclusively, demands one World Government. She sees in the clash of Nazism and Bolshevism a symbol, as well as in the hate of Tito: no two or more such systems can coexist "since competition as such invites doubt and rebellion." Evidently Hitler and Stalin looked on each other with a respect and sympathy which they had for neither Churchill nor Roosevelt—and yet they had to lock in a death struggle. For Miss Arendt, who has no profound respect for society on the brink of bourgeois collapse, there is one reason for hope: there will never be total domination of man, as this would presuppose one authority, one way of life, one ideology in all countries. The process of total domination will only come about when the last competition, the last refuge and the last comforter is gone.

Another chance for freedom is that totalitarian conquerors cannot assimiliate their conquest in easy, growing and gentle stages. They have to clamp down this system on the living flesh of the victim. The same is true—is it?—about China: "able only to think in centuries and continents, totalitarianism has only one chance of eventual victory and that is global catastrophe which would have to occur, so to speak, at a moment's notice."

Totalitarianism is the curse of the twentieth century. It may well disappear without any other traces than humanity exhausted and with the memory of a horror "worse than murder." What makes it memorable is that "it so terrifyingly took care of [the twentieth century's] real problems." It is the device of men who have lost their religion, "who think there is no sense in life and no difference between crime and virtue."

There is an acid and bitter humor in this book, when Miss Arendt draws the conclusions in the brightness of day which are and were whispered in Berchtesgaden and the Kremlin. They are all of a diabolical consistency. For instance, only Communism can build as wonderful a thing as the Dnieprostroj or Moscow subway. The existence of other power dams and subways—bigger at that—may raise a doubt in the absolute superiority of Communism. Thus the consequence is to destroy the free world's dams and subways—unless, of course, they are inferior.

Hannah Arendt in "open and mouldable" language finally reaches the conclusion that myths and religious interpretation have failed us. Nature and history are concepts on which you cannot build absolute values as they are in constant change, like shifting sands. There remains only one right transcending all rights: "never to be excluded from the rights granted by the community." This right is not lost by being thrown into jail but it is lost by being thrown into a concentration camp. Here, according to Miss Arendt, is the only crime that transcends sovereignty of any nation—the crime against humanity, all other wrongs belonging in the category of evil foreign policy, exploitation and political oppression. Here the cause of "humanity," taken in both senses by the author, is at stake—man's final cause. Here is then the ground on which we can claim that all mankind (humanity) has a case against a government that violates the basic right of every man (humanity).

★

MISS ARENDT does not believe in the Natural Law, as Catholics do. Granted her position, we must admit that she salvaged a noble idea and built a noble cause. As Sartre's atheist existentialism ventured out to find an ethical absolute, so Miss Arendt has tackled a Cyclopean task: to salvage the dignity of man without the props of Theism and subsequent Natural Law.

The picture is dismal for believers, but it shows a great courage and integrity. Her sober, just, supremely intelligent and laborious spading through almost 500 pages yields results that are not only impressive but may inspire us to reassess our own position. Her vision of the "prepolitical" foundations of a new polity and a new man are enough to place her among the great. How can so great a book be so wrong? Here is a real challenge for our great: Jacques Maritain, John Courtney Murray, Fathers D'Arcy and Danielou, Josef Pieper and Romano Guardini.

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Books

Balkan Caesar — Tito vs. Stalin. Leigh White. Scribners. $2.75.

MR. WHITE writes with the aggrieved and sarcastic air of a man who is proclaiming an eternal verity to a stone-deaf populace. The eternal verity he has happened upon is that Tito is a Communist. Tito is a lying, double-dealing, murdering, power-mad, sybaritic, tyrannical Communist, and nobody seems to care. In fact, the "timorous fat men" who run the world are subsidizing this international gangster, for the weird reason that he has had a run-in with another gangster. Such logic, Mr. White finds, is "fallacious," "a sickly illusion," and probably treasonable, too.

The author's indignation arises from praiseworthy moral fervor. He is opposed to Communism. When an officer of the State Department told him, "But you seem to think we're fighting Communism. We're not. We're fighting Russian imperialism," he was dismayed to the point of hyperpiesia. He fears that acceptance of Titoist Yugoslavia will blunt our moral sense. If we come to terms with Communism anywhere, if we accept a Titoist Europe as a lesser evil than a Stalinist Europe, we will be undermining the foundations of freedom and spelling "our ruin more surely than any atomic bomb."

Mr. White's bitterest scorn is vented on the "British and American Communists and their fellow travelers" who convinced the misinformed Churchill and the foolish Roosevelt to support Tito during the war. He argues, with considerable justice, that Allied transfer of support from Mikhailovitch to Tito made Communist victory in Yugoslavia inevitable. The military considerations that influenced such on-the-spot observers as Conservatives Fitzroy Maclean and Randolph Churchill should have been discounted; it was unimportant that Tito was fighting the Germans and Italians vigorously and successfully, whereas Mikhailovitch, in Winston Churchill's words, "has not been fighting the enemy, and moreover, some of his subordinates have been making accommodations with the enemy." Our error, Mr. White believes, was in thinking we could win the war first and play politics afterwards instead of recognizing that the conduct of the war itself involved political decisions of the highest order.

One of Brigadier Maclean's reasons for urging support of the Partisans was that "taking a long view, it seemed just conceivable that in the end nationalism might triumph over Communism." Mr. White is disinclined to alter his low opinion of Maclean merely because this prediction came true. He acknowledges that Tito has broken with Stalin, and gives a good summary of the reasons for the schism, but he finds that the break has not materially helped the Western cause. What have we gained?

1. Tito withdrew his support from the Communist rebels in Greece—but probably only because American intervention convinced him that the cause was lost.

2. Tito has released hundreds of Yugoslav-Americans, captured Greek children, and Italian and German prisoners of war — but there are many more still imprisoned.

3. Tito has excoriated Russian imperialism, ended the Kremlin's undisputed monopoly over Communist policy, and created dissension in Communist movements all over the world—but Titoism is still Communism. Moreover, Tito was useful to Stalin; Titoism was the extra "bugaboo" that enabled Stalin to consolidate his control of Eastern Europe. Mr. White, whose distrust of Tito is unconfined, also questions the sincerity of his allegiance to the anti-Russian bloc; if he believed Stalin could win, he might turn his coat again.

4. Tito's army is at present ar-

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rayed against Russia—but while Tito may have fifty to seventy divisions in uniform, plus trained reserves, fewer than ten divisions are highly trained, and the Russians could overrun the country at their leisure.

On these assumptions, Mr. White concludes that we might just as well consign Tito to the nearest outhouse. Our only true friends are confirmed anti-Communists. He states flatly that however unpopular and dictatorial a government may be, if it is opposed to Communism, it is deserving of a rapture of dollars. Let us embrace Franco and Chiang Kai-shek forthwith, for fascism is and always was a minor threat compared to Communism, and besides, fascism is "merely a synthesis of Communism . . . [and if we] defeat Communism . . . what remains of fascism, in Spain and elsewhere, will inevitably disappear." This, evidently, despite the bounteous aid we would be dispensing.

It is difficult to accept large portions of Mr. White's argument. If his premise is that war with Russia is inevitable and we should make immediate preparations for military victory, why cavil at help from even the tyrant Tito? On the other hand, if he believes that efforts should still be made to prevent war, and that in order to strengthen our position, winning allies throughout Europe and Asia is as important as military and economic preparation, why jeopardize our moral leadership by bolstering Franco and his ilk?

His position is evidently different from both—our policy should be a holy crusade against Communism everywhere, whether or not in a particular country it is a threat to our security. Logically this would be a policy of wholesale intervention, for the benefit of oppressed people. Mr. White actually recommends that such magnanimous guardianship be applied only against Communist governments, since he trusts that all other anti-democratic manifestations will, in the absence of Communism, wither away.

Mr. White is a journalist, and as a journalistic account, *Balkan Caesar* offers some pertinent reminders about the Tito regime. It emphasizes Tito's sabotage of the 1941 revolt that overthrew the appeasement-minded government and brought Yugoslavia to the side of the Allies. It recalls the lack of safeguards in the Yalta decision on Yugoslavia, and the ease with which Tito disregarded the obligations of broadening the membership of the government and providing for free elections. At a time when Tito is accepted, in some quarters at least, as the hope of the West, this is a handy review of his career of duplicity and the oppressive nature of his control.

But when the report becomes a tract, it weakens its own case. It gets bogged down in overstatements, fancy theories, and fancier prescriptions (one of the counsels is: invade Albania now). Particularly in dealing with events after 1948, the book is far from convincing. Mr. White is so certain that a Communist can do no right that he derides the possibility of any advantages accruing to the West from Tito's struggle with the Cominform.

Only in his last paragraph does he face the realities of 1951 and accept the policy of granting aid to Tito—with the condition that we exact from him a quid for every quo. This, it seems to me, is a tenable position, although it may be doubted whether a man who has defied all the force of the Kremlin would be amenable to our pressures. Perhaps it is just as important, as Hamilton Fish Armstrong argues, to convince Tito that capitalist nations need not always be exploitive, and to keep Yugoslavia open and receptive to the influence of the West. CAROL H. WEISS.

Barbary Shore. Norman Mailer. Rinehart. $3.

THERE are only six characters in this book and they are all symbols. Five of them I think I got. The sixth I'm not sure. Character number one is a somewhat tired radical, a devoted Marxist but sharp critic of the bureaucratic Party which betrayed the Revolution, in Russia and the world. *(The Pure Revolutionary Spirit).* Two is a small-minded, small-souled, snivelling Investigator (*McCarthyism,* or something of that sort). Three is a sentimental, highly untrustworthy female who sleeps with the other symbols—except, of course, the pure Marxist who is not taken in by her. *(Ineffectual Liberalism).* The fourth is a good-hearted, hard-working, rather stupid woman, too easily wooed, too easily won, who shares her favors

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with the others but really belongs in bed only with the Marxist, her true and proper husband (*Our World*). A girl-child, separated for a time from the Marxist, her father, is the fifth. She apparently is the daughter of Our World and the Revolutionary Spirit and events conspire for a while to keep her father a stranger. But after she gets to know him, without question the kid's heart belongs to Daddy. The child, I guess, is *The Future*. The sixth is the one I'm not at all sure of. He is the narrator, a young man who has no memory of the past but supposes he was in the great war. Maybe he's the Naked and the Dead.

Anyway, all these people talk endlessly, and much of their talk is straight Marxist doctrine and who should be surprised that the novel is about as bracing as 300 pages of *Das Kapital* and at times considerably more obscure. Now and then Norman Mailer's natural gifts are fleetingly evident, despite all the yakity-yakity, but these times are too few and far between.

Now that he's got all this out of his system, maybe Mailer will get back to the business of writing a novel. He has too much on the ball to be exchanging his birthright for a pot of message like this.

JOHN COGLEY.

Father Paul of Graymoor. David Gannon, S.A. Macmillan Co. $4.

EVERYBODY who came into contact with Father Paul even as briefly as I did was immediately conscious that he was a remarkable man and also one of great charm. It is, however, a little unfortunate that a merely incidental charity of his, that of providing a hostel for tramps and homeless men, received so much publicity in the press that his main work tended to be obscured. Father Gannon has now most clearly indicated what this was and how much good was accomplished.

As Father Wattson, an Episcopalian, he assumed the Franciscan habit and the name of Father Paul James Francis, beginning in a very small way, the only other member of his community being a converted Jew who served as a laybrother, but with immense encouragement from Mother Laurana, the foundress of the women's branch of the Atonement Society.

Father Paul set himself to the preaching of the reunion of Christendom, by which he meant that the Anglican, the Orthodox and the Roman communions should all recognize the supremacy of the Pope. He was even in those days completely Catholic in feeling but he believed in the validity of Anglican clerical orders and that it was his duty to work for his ends as an Episcopalian Franciscan. Only when he was at last brought to see that his early conviction as to the reality of the Anglican priesthood could not be sustained did he decide to make his submission to the Holy See.

He asked that his community should be accepted as a body, and though this was something unheard

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To the Editors...

"Liberal Viewpoint"

Essex, Connecticut

THIS is simply a note from one of your subscribers who reads The Commonweal each week with profound admiration. I honestly do not believe that any publication in the country is presenting the liberal viewpoint as thoughtfully and courageously as you are presenting it today, and I mean "liberal viewpoint" in the broadest and finest sense of the word.

As the Cold War becomes more critical, people seem more inclined to depend on military preparedness alone. The need for a strong defense program is obvious. But unless we are willing to go to bat boldly and imaginatively in behalf of the human individual, both in our own country and throughout the world, civilization will eventually be doomed, just as surely as it would be doomed if we tried to live in the same world with Russia without an Army or an Air Force.

Let me express my heartfelt appreciation for what you are doing. With my best wishes.

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of at the time, his request was granted, largely through the good offices of Cardinal Merry del Val and of the future Cardinal Falconio, who was Apostolic Delegate at the time. He continued to wear the Franciscan habit, except for the four days a week he had to study for the priesthood at Dunwoodie. Every possible encouragement was given to his work; indeed the yearly Octave of Prayer for the reunion of Christendom he had started while an Anglican was extended to the Universal Church. And the community he had founded with two members is now operating on four continents. Father Paul's is a unique story.

THEODORE MAYNARD.

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• REVIEWERS •

CAROL WEISS, who recently completed graduate study in Political Science at Columbia, is now an executive with the Girl Scouts of America in their New York headquarters.

THEODORE MAYNARD is an historian whose latest work, *Through My Gift,* a biography of Mother Frances Schervier, will be published this month.

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